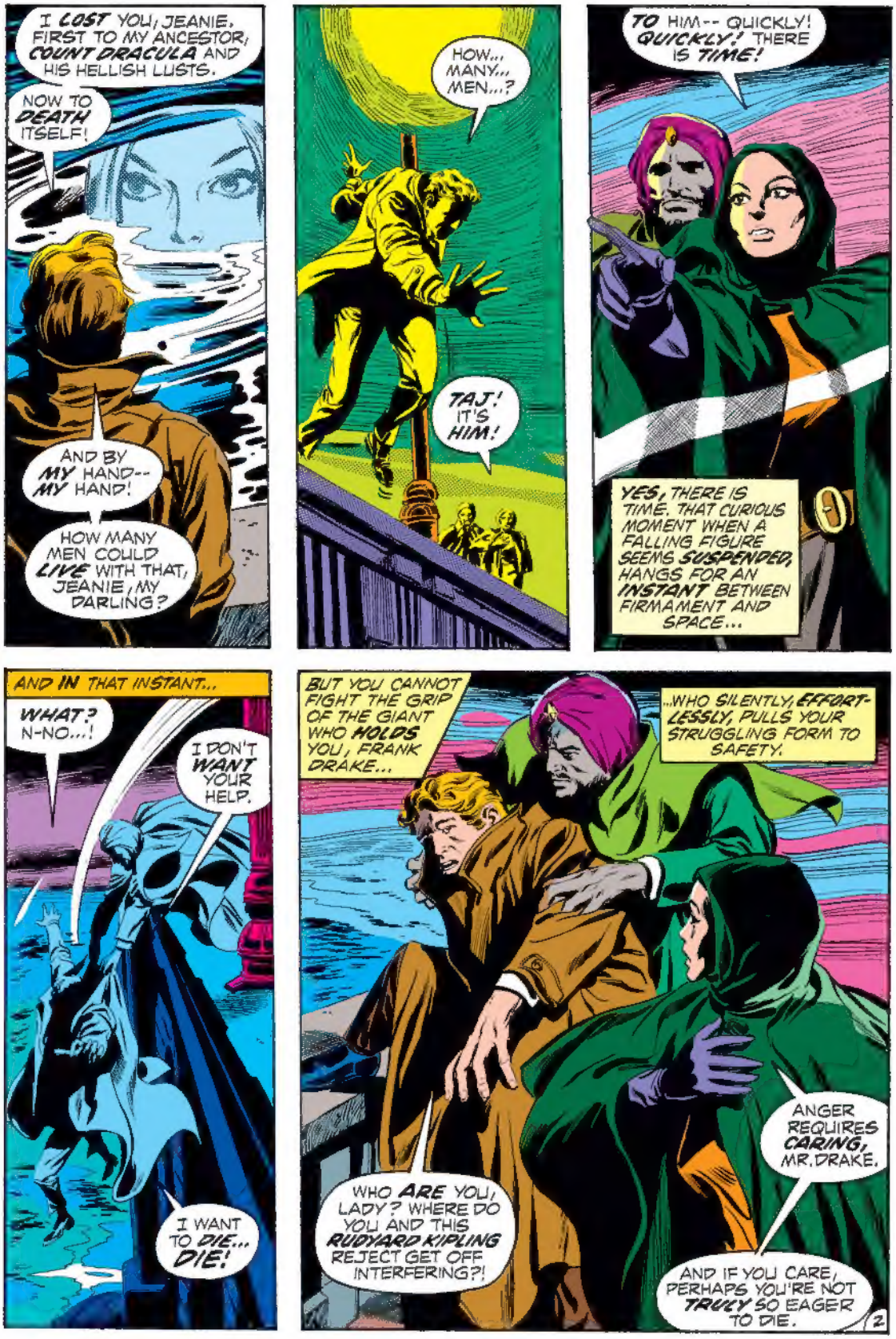
TOMB OF DRACULA
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
20¢ 3 JULY 02143

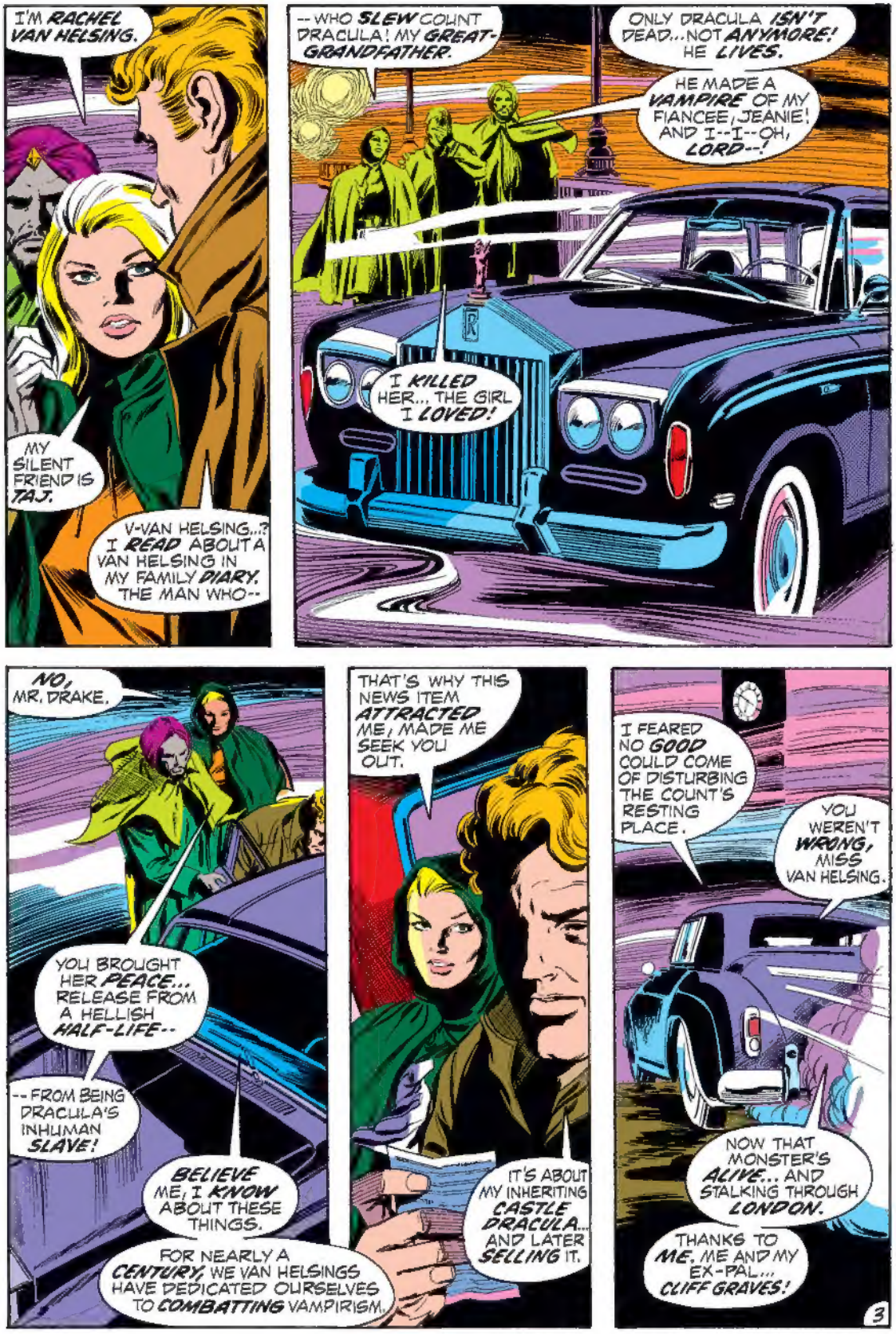
THE TOMB OF DRACULA™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

TO STALK A VAMPIRE!

TOMB OF DRACULA!™
WHO STALKS THE VAMPIRE?
YOUR NAME IS FRANK DRAKE, AND FOR A DAY, YOU'VE NUMBLY WALKED THE LONDON STREETS, SEEKING IN VAIN TO ERASE A MEMORY...
...THE MEMORY OF THRUSTING A WOODEN STAKE, OF STRIKING SOFT FLESH... OF SEEING A ONCE BEAUTIFUL FORM CRUMBLE INTO DUST AND NOTHINGNESS.
NOW, IN THE NIGHT, IN FOG THAT DANKLY SEEPS THROUGH CLOTH AND SKIN TO CHILL THE VERY BONE, IN THE STEADY RUSH OF THE THAMES' DARK WATERS BELOW...
...YOU FEEL YOU'VE FOUND THE ANSWER.
AND THAT ANSWER IS... SUICIDE.
STAN LEE, EDITOR · ARCHIE GOODWIN, WRITER · GENE COLAN, ARTIST · TOM PALMER, INKER · JON COSTA, LETTERER


I LOST YOU, JEANIE, FIRST TO MY ANCESTOR, COUNT DRACULA AND HIS HELLISH LUSTS.
NOW TO DEATH ITSELF!
AND BY MY HAND-- MY HAND!
HOW MANY MEN COULD LIVE WITH THAT, JEANIE, MY DARLING?
HOW... MANY... MEN...?
TAJ! IT'S HIM!
TO HIM-- QUICKLY! QUICKLY! THERE IS TIME!
YES, THERE IS TIME. THAT CURIOUS MOMENT WHEN A FALLING FIGURE SEEMS SUSPENDED, HANGS FOR AN INSTANT BETWEEN FIRMAMENT AND SPACE...
AND IN THAT INSTANT...
WHAT? N-NO...!
I DON'T WANT YOUR HELP.
I WANT TO DIE... DIE!
BUT YOU CANNOT FIGHT THE GRIP OF THE GIANT WHO HOLDS YOU, FRANK DRAKE...
...WHO SILENTLY, EFFORTLESSLY, PULLS YOUR STRUGGLING FORM TO SAFETY.
WHO ARE YOU, LADY? WHERE DO YOU AND THIS RUDYARD KIPLING REJECT GET OFF INTERFERING?!
ANGER REQUIRES CARING, MR. DRAKE.
AND IF YOU CARE, PERHAPS YOU'RE NOT TRULY SO EAGER TO DIE.
2


I'M RACHEL VAN HELSING.
MY SILENT FRIEND IS TAJ.
V-VAN HELSING...? I READ ABOUT A VAN HELSING IN MY FAMILY DIARY. THE MAN WHO--
-- WHO SLEW COUNT DRACULA! MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER.
ONLY DRACULA ISN'T DEAD...NOT ANYMORE! HE LIVES.
HE MADE A VAMPIRE OF MY FIANCEE, JEANIE! AND I--I--OH, LORD--!
I KILLED HER... THE GIRL I LOVED!
NO, MR. DRAKE.
YOU BROUGHT HER PEACE... RELEASE FROM A HELLISH HALF-LIFE--
-- FROM BEING DRACULA'S INHUMAN SLAVE!
BELIEVE ME, I KNOW ABOUT THESE THINGS.
FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, WE VAN HELSINGS HAVE DEDICATED OURSELVES TO COMBATTING VAMPIRISM.
THAT'S WHY THIS NEWS ITEM ATTRACTED ME, MADE ME SEEK YOU OUT.
IT'S ABOUT MY INHERITING CASTLE DRACULA... AND LATER SELLING IT.
I FEARED NO GOOD COULD COME OF DISTURBING THE COUNT'S RESTING PLACE.
YOU WEREN'T WRONG, MISS VAN HELSING.
NOW THAT MONSTER'S ALIVE... AND STALKING THROUGH LONDON.
THANKS TO ME. ME AND MY EX-PAL..., CLIFF GRAVES!
3

CLOSIN' TIME, MATE!
YOU SPENT THE DAY 'ERE, LADDY--
YOU AIN'T GONNER SPEND THE NIGHT.
YOU 'EAR, MATEY? BLEEDIN' PUB'S CLOSED!
H-HUH...? NO! DON'T MAKE ME GO OUT THERE... NOT INTO THE DARK!
LOOK, I'VE GOT MONEY. I'LL BUY--
YOU'LL BUY TROUBLE, YOU WILL.
I'M TIRED. WANNA GO 'OME, NOT ARGUE WITH SOME ALE-SOAKED YANK!
PLEASE! DON'T DO THIS...NOT WHILE ITS DARK, NOT--
OUT!
NO SELF-RESPECTIN' 'OBGOBLIN'S GONNA TOUCH A STINKIN' SOT LIKE YOU!
WOULDN'T LISTEN. NOBODY DOES. NOBODY BELIEVES.
WELL, THEY DIDN'T SEE. DIDN'T SEE JEANIE, DISSOLVING, CRUMBLING...
DIDN'T SEE HIM...
WITH THAT SMILE, THOSE TEETH, AND... AND...
WHO'S THERE? WHO IS--
DON'T YOU KNOW, CLIFTON GRAVES? YOU WHO PULLED THE STAKE FROM MY SKELETON...
YOU WHO BROUGHT ME TO LIFE AGAIN! CAN'T YOU LOOK INTO MY EYES-- AND SEE?
CAN'T YOU STARE LONG AND DEEP AND KNOW--
DRACULA HAS NEED OF YOU!
YAAHHHHHH
4

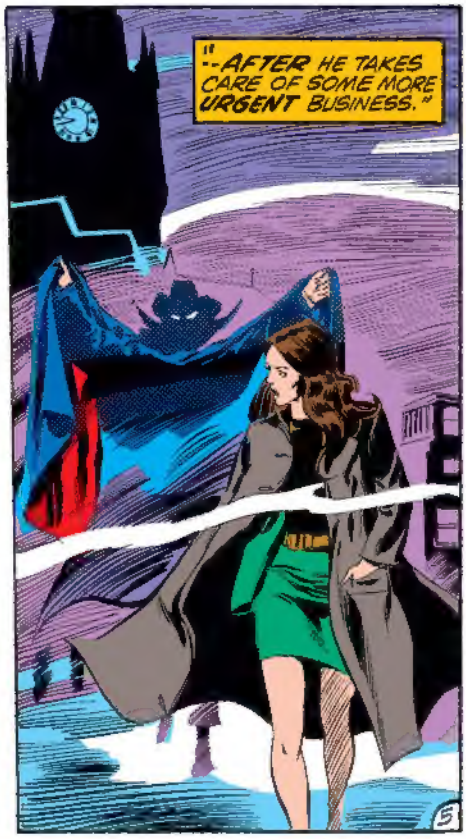
A SCREAM ABRUPTLY ENDS... NOT IN DEATH FOR CLIFTON GRAVES, FOR IT IS NOT A VICTIM DRACULA SEEKS, BUT...
...A SLAVE.
UH--MR. GRAVES--OF COURSE. YOU STAYED HERE WITH MR. DRAKE.

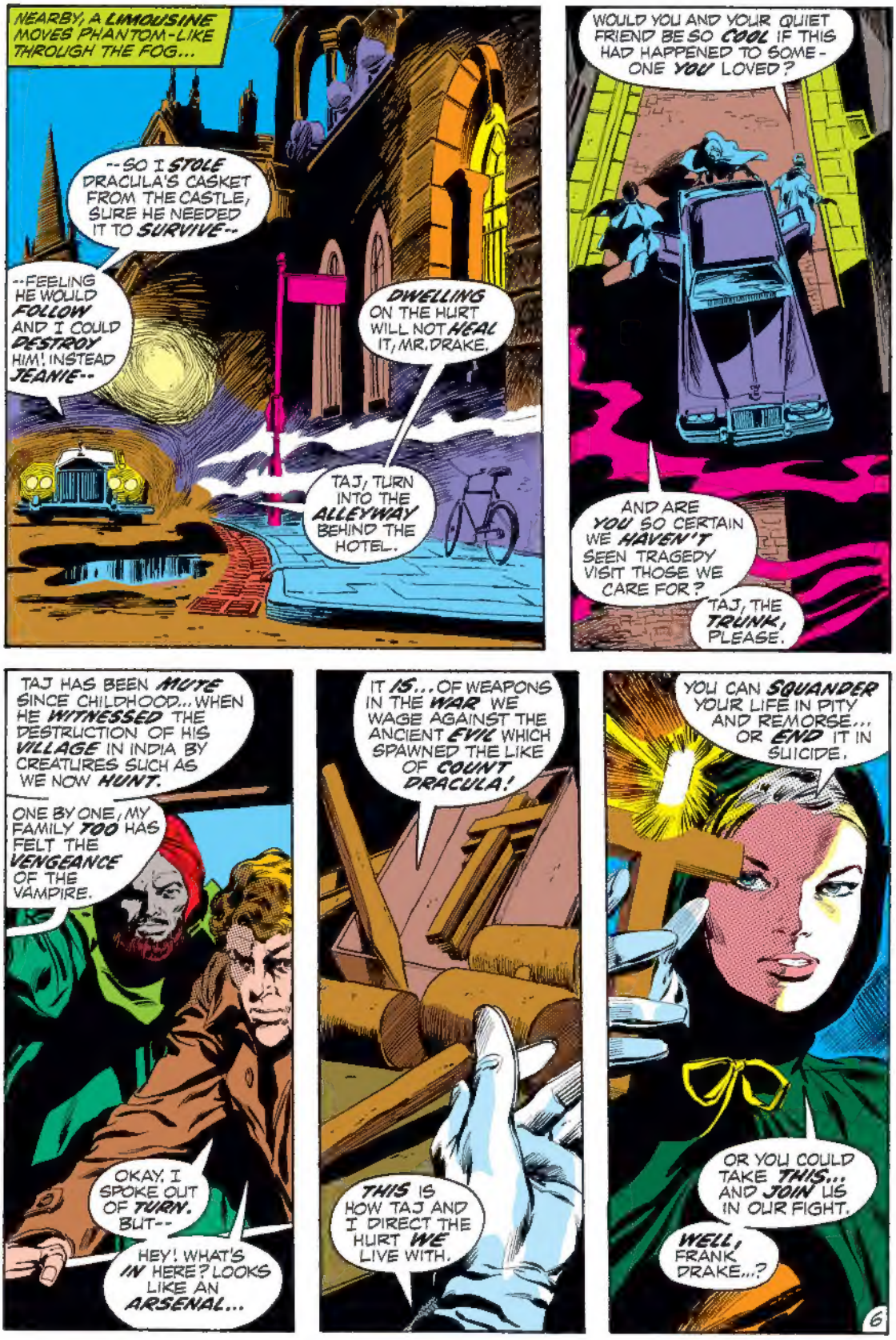
FOR A MOMENT I DIDN'T QUITE--ER--RECOGNIZE YOU. MAY I HELP YOU?
I BELIEVE FRANK LEFT SOMETHING WHEN HE CHECKED OUT. HE SENT ME TO PICK IT UP.
A BOX... A LARGE, OBLONG BOX.
I--UH--REALLY WOULDN'T KNOW, SIR.
BEST CHECK WITH THE NIGHT PORTER... IN THE BASEMENT.

AND..
UP! I'VE NO TIME TO BE PATIENT OR SUBTLE. I'M SEEKING A COFFIN... A COFFIN!
H-HUH...?
THAT THING THE DRAKE BLOKE--
--PAID ME AN' THE DAY MAN TO BURN?

WHAT?! YOU DARED DESTROY PROPERTY OF THE MASTER?
EASY, GUV'... EASY.
WE AIN'T GOT 'ROUND TO IT YET. IF THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE O' MIND--
I'LL TAKE YOU TO IT... FER A FEW BOB MORE, EH?

STORAGE ROOMS ARE DOWN 'ERE IN THE SUB-BASEMENT.
DUNNO 'OW YOU'RE GONNER MOVE IT WITHOUT 'ELP THOUGH.
DON'T WORRY.
SOMEONE WILL BE JOINING ME--


"--AFTER HE TAKES CARE OF SOME MORE URGENT BUSINESS."
5


NEARBY, A LIMOUSINE MOVES PHANTOM-LIKE THROUGH THE FOG...
--SO I STOLE DRACULA'S CASKET FROM THE CASTLE, SURE HE NEEDED IT TO SURVIVE--
--FEELING HE WOULD FOLLOW AND I COULD DESTROY HIM! INSTEAD JEANIE--
DWELLING ON THE HURT WILL NOT HEAL IT, MR. DRAKE.
TAJ, TURN INTO THE ALLEYWAY BEHIND THE HOTEL.
WOULD YOU AND YOUR QUIET FRIEND BE SO COOL IF THIS HAD HAPPENED TO SOMEONE YOU LOVED?
AND ARE YOU SO CERTAIN WE HAVEN'T SEEN TRAGEDY VISIT THOSE WE CARE FOR?
TAJ, THE TRUNK, PLEASE.
TAJ HAS BEEN MUTE SINCE CHILDHOOD... WHEN HE WITNESSED THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS VILLAGE IN INDIA BY CREATURES SUCH AS WE NOW HUNT.
ONE BY ONE, MY FAMILY TOO HAS FELT THE VENGEANCE OF THE VAMPIRE.
OKAY. I SPOKE OUT OF TURN. BUT--
HEY! WHAT'S IN HERE? LOOKS LIKE AN ARSENAL...
IT IS... OF WEAPONS IN THE WAR WE WAGE AGAINST THE ANCIENT EVIL WHICH SPAWNED THE LIKE OF COUNT DRACULA!
THIS IS HOW TAJ AND I DIRECT THE HURT WE LIVE WITH.
YOU CAN SQUANDER YOUR LIFE IN PITY AND REMORSE... OR END IT IN SUICIDE.
OR YOU COULD TAKE THIS... AND JOIN US IN OUR FIGHT.
WELL, FRANK DRAKE...?
6

YOU MAKE SENSE, LADY. GOOD SENSE.
AVENSE JEANIE BY HELPING YOU HUNT THE COUNT AND HIS LIKE...? ALL RIGHT!
WHATEVER THE CONSEQUENCES, I'M WITH YOU... I SWEAR IT!
THEN WE BEGIN!
HERE? WHERE I STAYED?
OBVIOUSLY, DRACULA HAS MORE THAN ONE COFFIN.
OTHERWISE, HE'D HAVE PERISHED BEFORE EVER REACHING YOU.
YET HE STILL CAME AFTER THE ONE YOU STOLE...
IF IT'S NOT YET DESTROYED, I'D LIKE TO EXAMINE IT--
--AND PERHAPS LEARN WHY IT'S SO SPECIAL TO HIM.
AND NOT FAR FROM RACHEL VAN HELSING, THAT SECRET IS ABOUT TO BE REVEALED...
MIND WHAT YOU'RE DOING, YOU CLUMSY CLOWN!
YOU'RE LETTING IT SLIP!
MIND IT YOURSELF, GUV'--
EVEN EMPTY, IT'S TOO BLINKIN' 'EAVY!
COR'! WHAT'S THIS...?!
THE BLEEDIN' BOTTOM'S FALSE... AN' FULL O' COINS! GOLD COINS!
KRASH
YOU BUMBLING CRETIN!
YELL AT ME LATER, GUV'! I AIN'T LETTIN' NONE O' THESE BEAUTIES ROLL AWAY.
NOT A ONE OF 'EM! NOT... EVEN...
KLINK
KLINK
CHING
O-ONE...!
7

YOU'RE A GREEDY, LITTLE MAN, AREN'T YOU, MY FRIEND?
NEVER FEAR. YOUR WORK TONIGHT WILL NOT GO UNREWARDED.
BUT YOU WILL NOT SHARE THE GOLD OF DRACULA!
THAT WAS SECRETED IN MY RESTING PLACE AGAINST A TIME WOULD I WOULD RISE AGAIN--
--WHEN I WOULD NEED WEALTH TO LIVE ONCE MORE IN THE REGAL MANNER FITTING A DRACULA.
AND THAT TIME IS NOW.
AS FOR YOUR DUE...
N-NO... STAY BACK! I AIN'T HAVIN' NO TRUCK WITH ANY BLOKE--
--WHAT CALLS A BLINKIN' COFFIN 'IS RESTIN' PLACE!
YOU'VE NO LONGER A CHOICE IN THE MATTER, MY SCURRY LITTLE MOUSE OF A MAN.
NO! TAKE YER GOLD.. JUST KEEP AWAY! KEEP--
:UNGHHH!:
GUV'...! TALK TO YER FRIEND... STOP 'IM! 'E'S GOT MURDER IN THEM EYES OF 'IS... M-MURDER AN' WORSE!
G-GUV'...?
ANSWER ME! YOU CAN'T JUST STAND BY LIKE A ZOMBIE AN' LET 'IM--
BUT OF COURSE HE CAN, YOU FOOL--
8

--HE HAS NO WILL BUT DRACULA'S!
AND NOW--
--YOUR REWARD.
THE CLERK SAID GRAVES CAME DOWN HERE, RACHEL, BUT--
EEEAIAAAGH
LORD! THAT SCREAM--
FROM BEYOND THAT DOOR!
SOME KIND OF SUB-BASEMENT...
THOUGHT CLIFF AND I PERMANENTLY PARTED COMPANY THIS MORNING. CAN'T FIGURE HIS BEING BACK AFTER THAT CASKET...
AND AFTER THAT SHRIEK, I'M NOT CERTAIN I WANT TO FIND OUT!
FRANK...!
I SEE IT, RACHEL... LIGHT FROM ONE OF THE STORAGE ROOMS.
BE READY FOR ANYTHING--
DRACULA'S COFFIN!
BUT NO SIGN OF ANYONE.
LEAVES ONLY ONE PLACE TO CHECK--
CREEEEK
NOT THAT I LOOK FORWARD TO IT.
9

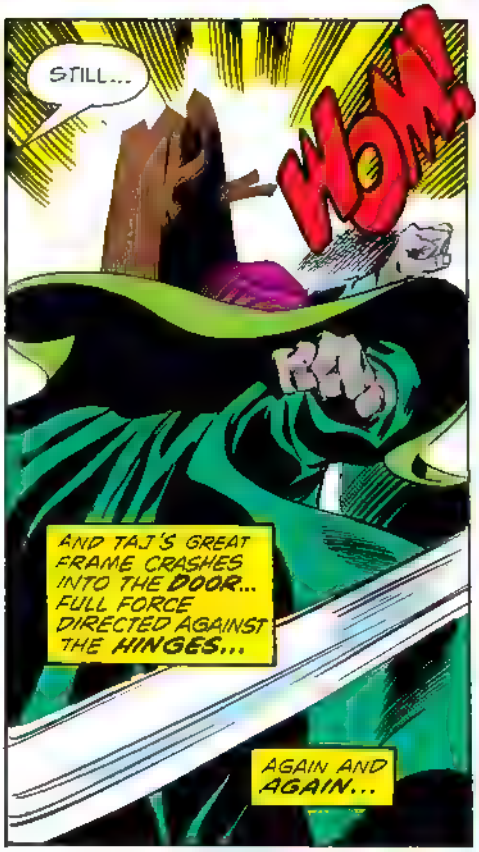
THE NIGHT PORTER...! DEAD...
AND ON HIS THROAT... THE MARK OF THE VAMPIRE!
THE NOISE IS FAINT, BUT IN THE GRIM SILENCE FOLLOWING RACHEL VAN HELSING'S WORDS, ANY SOUND WOULD BE LIKE THUNDER...
BEHIND US--!
RACHEL-- DRACULA!
AND CLIFF!
THEY HID IN THE SHADOWS UNTIL THE DOOR WAS CLEAR!
BUT, USING RAGE AND THE MEMORY OF A GIRL NAMED JEAN TO OVERCOME THE FEAR WITHIN YOU...
YOU MOVE, FRANK DRAKE.
THEY'RE NOT OUT YET.
AND WHILE I'VE GOT THIS CROSS--
THEY WON'T BE.
GRAVES!
YES, MASTER--
I KNOW WHAT MUST BE DONE!
ARRGHHHH!
MASTER... THESE BAGS WE FOUND WERE OLD, WORN--
YOUR G-GOLD...
10

PICK IT UP, FOOL! WITH THAT CURSED CRUCIFIX GONE--
THESE OTHERS ARE AS NOTHING TO ME!
EVEN YOU, GIANT.
WITH YOUR STAKE AND DETERMINED SILENCE--
--YOU ARE NOTHING AGAINST THE STRENGTH OF DRACULA--
--THE STRENGTH OF TWENTY MERE MEN!
AND YOU, MY DEAR, I'VE LEFT FOR LAST. RACHEL, I BELIEVE MY TURNCOAT DESCENDANT CALLED YOU..
YOU SHOW LITTLE FEAR, RACHEL
I AM A VAN HELSING, COUNT.
YOU MAY RECALL THE NAME--
--AND REMEMBER WE ARE NOT WITHOUT RESOURCES!
A CROSSBOW!
KA-CHUNG
AND ITS BOLT IS WOODEN-TIPPED!
THE LAST VAN HELSING'S AIM IS TRUE...
BUT EVEN AS THE SHAFT SPEEDS FOR DRACULA'S HEART...
HIS VERY FORM IS SHIFTING, CHANGING
..BECOMING A NIGHTED SHAPE NO ARROW CAN CATCH!
11

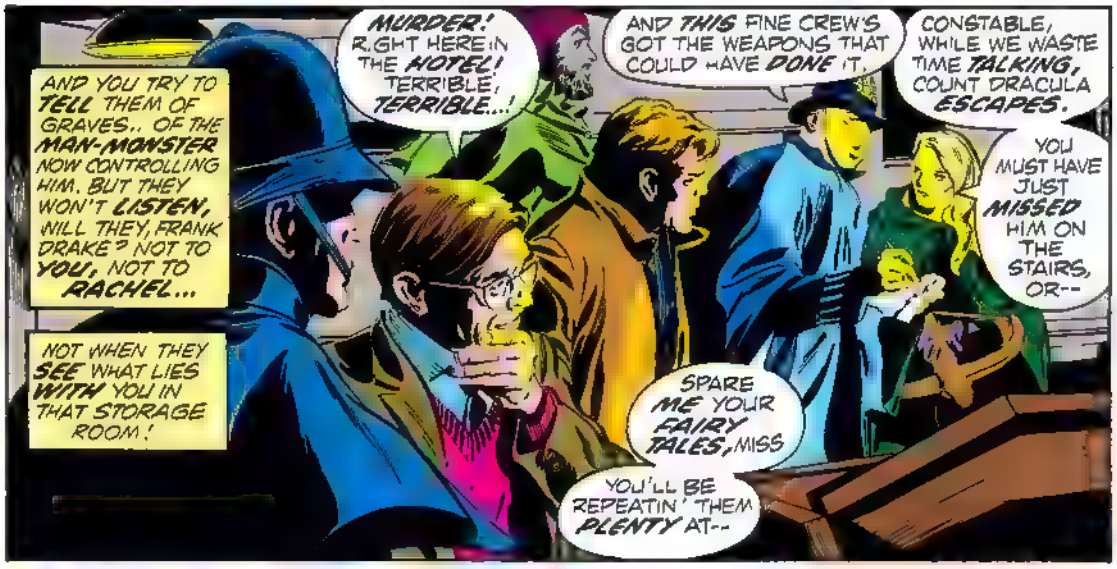
AND, IN BAT-FORM, COUNT DRACULA FLEES... FOLLOWED BY THE MAN WHO HAS BECOME HIS SERVANT, HIS SLAVE.
NOT SO FAST, CLEFF.
I STILL OWE YOU, OLD BUDDY.

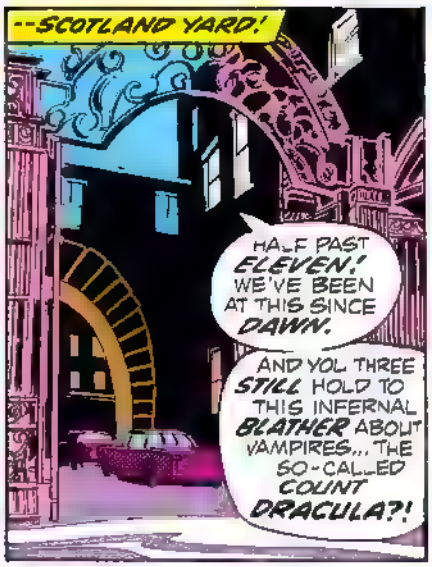
BUT AS THE REVIVED DRAKE TRIES TO FOLLOW...
SLAM
LOCKED, BLAST IT! BREEZE FROM NOWHERE BLEW IT SHUT!
DON'T BE CERTAIN IT WAS FROM NOWHERE, FRANK...
NOT WHEN IT'S COUNT DRACULA WE DEAL WITH.

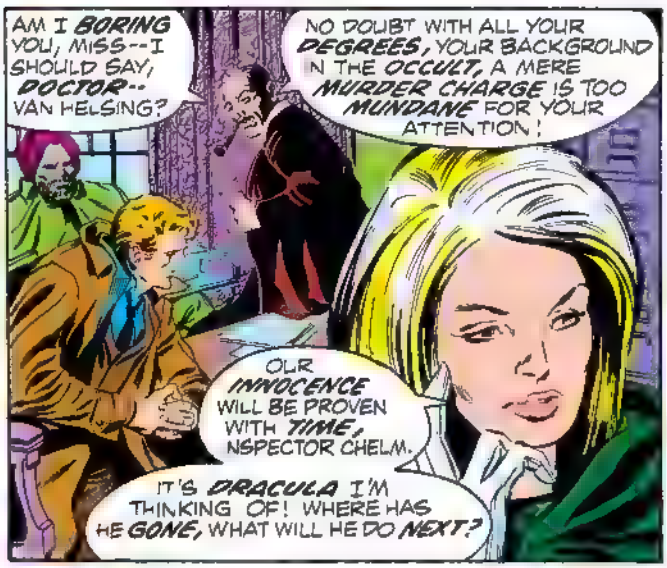
THEN HE DID HIS WORK WELL, RACHEL. THAT DOOR'S HEAVY AND SOLID. WE'RE GOING TO BE IN HERE A LONG--
TAJ, WHAT--?
GIVE HIM ROOM, FRANK. HIS STRENGTH IS HARDLY THAT OF DRACULA'S--

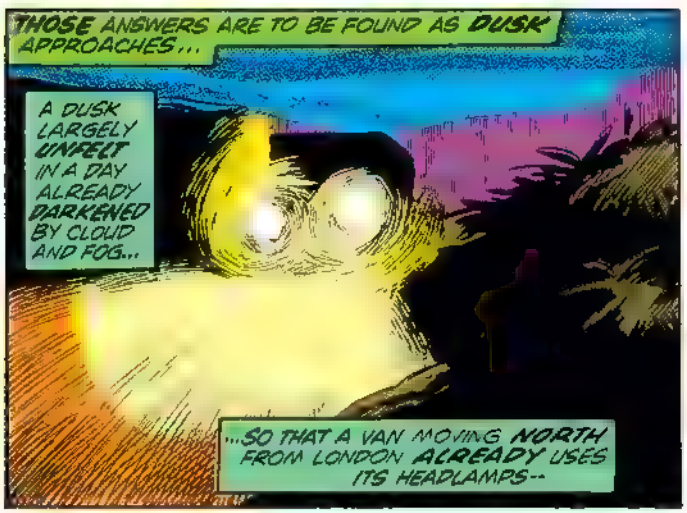

STILL...
WOM!
AND TAJ'S GREAT FRAME CRASHES INTO THE DOOR... FULL FORCE DIRECTED AGAINST THE HINGES...
AGAIN AND AGAIN...

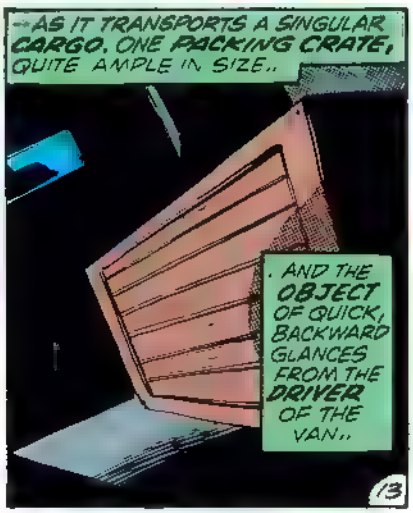
UNTIL... THAT'S FAR ENOUGH! EVERYONE STAY WHERE YOU ARE!
THAT'S THREE OF THEM, CONSTABLE.
THIS LOT CAME DOWN JUST BEFORE I HEARD THE PORTER'S SCREAM AND SENT FOR YOU!
BUT I DON'T SEE THE OTHER ONE... GRAVES!


AND YOU TRY TO TELL THEM OF GRAVES.. OF THE MAN-MONSTER NOW CONTROLLING HIM. BUT THEY WON'T LISTEN, WILL THEY, FRANK DRAKE? NOT TO YOU, NOT TO RACHEL...
NOT WHEN THEY SEE WHAT LIES WITH YOU IN THAT STORAGE ROOM!
MURDER! RIGHT HERE IN THE HOTEL! TERRIBLE, TERRIBLE...!
AND THIS FINE CREW'S GOT THE WEAPONS THAT COULD HAVE DONE IT.
CONSTABLE, WHILE WE WASTE TIME TALKING, COUNT DRACULA ESCAPES.
YOU MUST HAVE JUST MISSED HIM ON THE STAIRS, OR--
SPARE ME YOUR FAIRY TALES, MISS
YOU'LL BE REPEATIN' THEM PLENTY AT--

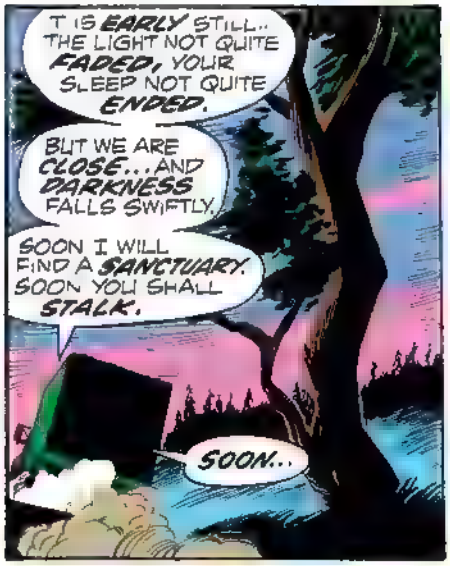

--SCOTLAND YARD!
HALF PAST ELEVEN! WE'VE BEEN AT THIS SINCE DAWN.
AND YOU THREE STILL HOLD TO THIS INFERNAL BLATHER ABOUT VAMPIRES... THE SO-CALLED COUNT DRACULA?!


AM I BORING YOU, MISS--I SHOULD SAY, DOCTOR-- VAN HELSING?
NO DOUBT WITH ALL YOUR DEGREES, YOUR BACKGROUND IN THE OCCULT, A MERE MURDER CHARGE IS TOO MUNDANE FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
OUR INNOCENCE WILL BE PROVEN WITH TIME, INSPECTOR CHELM.
IT'S DRACULA I'M THINKING OF! WHERE HAS HE GONE, WHAT WILL HE DO NEXT?


THOSE ANSWERS ARE TO BE FOUND AS DUSK APPROACHES...
A DUSK LARGELY UNFELT IN A DAY ALREADY DARKENED BY CLOUD AND FOG...
...SO THAT A VAN MOVING NORTH FROM LONDON ALREADY USES ITS HEADLAMPS--


--AS IT TRANSPORTS A SINGULAR CARGO. ONE PACKING CRATE, QUITE AMPLE IN SIZE..
. AND THE OBJECT OF QUICK, BACKWARD GLANCES FROM THE DRIVER OF THE VAN..

A MAN MOST ANXIOUS THAT HIS CARGO TRAVEL SAFELY AND WELL..
...CLIFTON GRAVES.
WE'RE CLOSE, MASTER... VERY CLOSE.
THEN THE VAN SWINGS ONTO A DESERTED LANE BEHIND A RAMBLING COUNTRY ESTATE, DARK AND GLOOMY AS THE DAY ITSELF...
YES! THIS IS IT. I VISITED THE LAWYER AND LEARNED ALL I NEEDED.
SCREEEEEE
IT HAS BEEN A LONG AND BUSY DAY, MASTER... BUT EVERYTHING YOU COMMANDED HAS BEEN DONE!
FROM EXCHANGING THE GOLD COINS FOR MODERN CURRENCY--
--TO HIRING MEN TO REMOVE THIS CRATE FROM WHERE IT LAY..
...IN THE HOTEL ROOM YOU RENTED ABOVE THE ONE OF THAT UNSUSPECTING FOOL, FRANK DRAKE!
AND THEY NEVER GUESSED WHAT THEY CARRIED TO THIS HIRED VAN--
THAT BENEATH THE WOOD AND PACKING STRAW..
--YOU LIE AT REST ON A BED OF NATIVE SOIL, MASTER!
AND NOW, WE ARE HERE. CAN YOU SENSE IT, FEEL IT, MASTER?
WE ARE NEAR THE HOME OF THE ONE WHO PRESUMES TO TAKE WHAT IS FOREVER YOURS.
WE ARE NEAR THE ONE WHO HAS DARED PURCHASE CASTLE DRACULA FROM FRANK DRAKE!
14

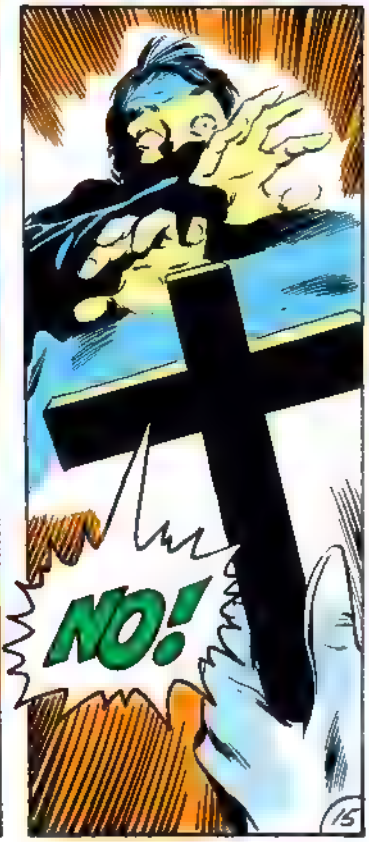

IT IS EARLY STILL.. THE LIGHT NOT QUITE FADED, YOUR SLEEP NOT QUITE ENDED.
BUT WE ARE CLOSE... AND DARKNESS FALLS SWIFTLY.
SOON I WILL FIND A SANCTUARY. SOON YOU SHALL STALK.
SOON...

YES, SOON THE LONG SHADOWS OF NIGHT FALL ACROSS THE LAND...
MORGUE
SHADOWS SUCH AS THESE THAT DARKEN OMINOUSLY LABELLED DOORS AT SCOTLAND YARD...

DOORS WHICH GUARD A PLACE COLD AND STARKLY QUIET... WHERE DRAPED FORMS LIE IN RIGID, FINAL STILLNESS...

SAVE FOR ONE!
I-I'M.. ALIVE! AND... AND...
I THIRST!
HERE THEN, A VICTIM OF DRACULA. NO LONGER A MAN, NO LONGER WHAT ANY WOULD CALL HUMAN. TRANSFORMED BY THE COUNT'S FATAL BITE INTO ONE OF ITS OWN...

INTO NIGHT'S DEADLIEST CREATURE... INTO A VAMPIRE!!
GOT TO FIND SOMEONE.. ANYONE!
MUST QUENCH THIS THIRST... DAMNABLE, DRIVIN' THIRST!
THE CORRIDOR! OUT THERE I'M BLASTED SURE TO FIND--


NO!
15

TAJ... FRANK!
SURROUND HIM... QUICKLY!
IF WE CATCH HIM BETWEEN OUR CROSSES--
--HE'LL BE TRAPPED AGAINST THE WALL.
THERE!
NOW, TAJ...
DR. VAN HELSING! THAT T-THING... IT'S THE PORTER! ALIVE AGAIN... STALKING... AS YOU SAID HE WOULD!
BUT IS IT NECESSARY--? DOES YOUR MAN HAVE TO--?
IT MUST BE DONE, INSPECTOR... AND SWIFTLY!
TAJ!
WOK!
LORD! I-IT'S FOR THE BEST.. BUT I DON'T BELIEVE I'LL EVER GET USED TO IT
NO. ONE NEVER DOES.
TO THE NECESSITY OF DESTROYING EVIL, PERHAPS. BUT THE KILLING? NEVER.
I OWE YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS AN APOLOGY. IF THERE'S ANYTHING SCOTLAND YARD CAN DO--
DRACULA IS STILL AT LARGE, INSPECTOR CHELM--
THIS VERY MOMENT, HE'S SOME-WHERE... HUNTING!
TO COMBAT HIM, EVERY BIT OF HELP IS NEEDED... AND EVEN THAT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH!

YES. THIS NIGHT THE COUNT HUNTS. FOR EVEN AS RACHEL SPEAKS...
...AN EBON-WINGED SHAPE SWOOPS NEAR A CERTAIN ESTATE WREATHED WITH FOG AND ITS OWN AURA OF EERIE MELANCHOLY.

WHILE, AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE SPRAWLING MANSE, ANOTHER VISITOR CALLS...
GOOD EVENING, WHITBY. I BELIEVE MRS. STRANGWAY IS EXPECTING ME.
YES, MR. LANGSTON. SHE'S WAITING IN THE STUDY!

CANDLES AGAIN, WHITBY?
I WISH ILSA WOULD SPEND A FEW POUNDS ON LAMPS.
AS HER SOLICITOR, I KNOW SHE CAN AFFORD IT.
MADAM FINDS HARSH LIGHT MOST UNPLEASANT, SIR.

YES, YES. I KNOW.
BUT A PERSON MIGHT THEN BE ABLE TO SEE SOME OF THESE MYRIAD PICTURES OF HER.
LORD, WHAT A BEAUTY! NO WONDER EVERY PAINTER AND PHOTOGRAPHER WANTED HER FOR A MODEL THEN.

:UGH!: I SEE BY THE CHANGE IN DECOR WE'RE APPROACHING THE STUDY.
PERHAPS DIM LIGHTING DOES HAVE ITS POINTS!

MR. LANGSON... UP FROM LONDON, MADAM.
THANK YOU, WHITBY. THAT WILL BE ALL.
WELL, GODFREY? YOU WISHED TO SEE ME?
SOMETHING ABOUT MY LATEST ACQUISITION, I BELIEVE.
DRACULA
-- BY BRAM STOKER
QUITE RIGHT, ILSA. A BIT ODD BUT--
GOOD LORD! WHERE DO YOU FIND THESE THINGS?
BLASTED MIRROR'S POSITIVELY CHILLING.
SOMETHING ABOUT THE GLASS... I-IT'S ALMOST BLACK!
RATHER ARRESTING, REALLY. YET--
AND AS LAWYER GODFREY LANGSTON STANDS MOMENTARILY TRANSFIXED BEFORE THE MIRROR...
OTHER EYES PEER AS WELL.
EYES IN A HOVERING, SINISTER FORM THAT BEGINS TO MELT...
...INTO A PRESENCE REGAL, PROUD...
...AND MORE SINISTER YET!
SO, ON AN OUTSIDE BALCONY, DRACULA STANDS STARING, EYES BLAZING IN INTEREST... HIS TOWERING, CLOAKED FIGURE AT ONE WITH THE DARKNESS... TOTALLY UNDETECTED, TOTALLY UNSEEN.
I DON'T LIKE IT, ILSA!
IT'S LIKE BEHOLDING THE MURKINESS OF ONE'S OWN SOUL.

BLAST! WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? GOING ON SO ABOUT A MIRROR WHEN THERE'S BUSINESS TO DISCUSS...
ILSA, A CHAP NAMED GRAVES VISITED ME TODAY... A BIT STRANGE REALLY.
BUT HE REPRESENTS SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BUY THAT SILLY CASTLE IN TRAN-SYLVANIA. AND I THINK--
GODFREY, IF THAT'S WHAT BROUGHT YOU FROM LONDON, YOU'VE WASTED MY TIME... AND YOURS!
CASTLE DRACULA IS NOT FOR SALE-- AT ANY PRICE-- NOT EVER!
ILSA, I'M YOUR SOLICITOR-- YOUR HUSBAND'S FRIEND WHEN HE WAS ALIVE!
I CAN'T STAND BY WHILE YOU SQUANDER A FORTUNE SURROUNDING YOURSELF WITH OCCULT JUNK!
THAT BURNT-OUT CASTLE IS THE FINAL STRAW--
WHY DO YOU DO IT? WHY?!
YOU HAVE ONLY TO LOOK, GODFREY! SEE ME AS I WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO--
AS I AM TODAY.
KLIK
I WAS A MODEL, GODFREY... THE GREATEST BEAUTY OF MY DAY!
NOW TIME EATS AT THAT BEAUTY-- ERODING IT, DESTROYING IT!
I WON'T ACCEPT IT! I'M NOT LIKE OTHERS... BEAUTY LIKE MINE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO AGE!
AND IF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE CAN'T UNDO THE RAVAGES OF TIME--
I'M PERFECTLY WILLING TO TURN TO MAGIC AND THE OCCULT!
I'VE HAD FAILURE THERE TOO. MOST OF THESE OBJECTS HAVE PROVEN WORTHLESS.
BUT HERE, GODFREY, IN THIS BOOK--THE BOOK OF DRACULA-- I'M CERTAIN I'VE FOUND AN ANSWER!
ILSA, LORD--! THAT BOOK'S A FICTION, BASED ON LEGEND AT BEST!
YOU CAN'T LET AN OBSESSION DELUDE YOU INTO ACCEPTING ALL THIS SUPER-NATURAL POPPYCOCK!
AGING IS PART OF LIFE, ILSA. LEARN TO ACCEPT IT BEFORE--
19

GET OUT, LANGSTON! OUT OF MY HOME!
YOU'RE DISMISSED, DO YOU HEAR ME? DISMISSED!
ALL RIGHT, ILSA, ALL RIGHT! I'M GOING.
AND ILSA STRANGWAY IS LEFT ALONE TO STARE BACK HER PAST... AND THE LOSSES OF TIME.
I ACCEPT NOTHING... NOTHING LESS THAN WHAT WAS ORIGINALLY MINE!
THEN, A WIND BURSTS BALCONY DOORS WIDE, A LAMP CRASHES, AND...
W-WHAT? WHO ARE Y—?
THE TALL MAN WITH EYES LIKE COALS STANDS SILENT, STRANGELY STILL... AS THOUGH WAITING...
AND SUDDENLY, ILSA STRANGWAY KNOWS, UNDERSTANDS...
YOU ARE... DRACULA!
MORE THAN LEGEND, MERE SUPERSTITION... YOU LIVE!
WHEN I PURCHASED YOUR CASTLE, I FELT SOMEWAY, SOMEHOW THIS MOMENT WOULD COME TO PASS.
BUT WHY DON'T YOU SPEAK-- OF COURSE!
THE LORE IS TRUE, ISN'T IT?
A VAMPIRE MAY NOT ENTER A HOME HE HAS NEVER BEFORE ENTERED UNLESS INVITED BY A MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD!
VERY WELL... ENTER, COUNT DRACULA!
I BELIEVE THERE IS MUCH WE CAN OFFER ONE ANOTHER!
MUCH INDEED!
NEXT: "THROUGH A MIRROR DARKLY!"